



Vol. 029 No 25

# Uloopi



Amar Chitra Katha: The Glorious Heritage of India



# ULOOPI

Uloopi was the daughter of Kauravya, king of the Nagas. The Nagas are a historical race and there are many references to them in the Puranas and Mahabharata. According to mythology, Nagadwipa was one of the seven divisions of India. There were Naga kingdoms in Mathura, Padmavati and Eastern India. Perhaps like the Asuras, Daityas and Danavas, the Nagas, too, offered strong resistance to the spread of Aryan culture. The favourite theory is that the Nagas were so named because they worshipped serpents (Nagas) and held them in awe. Mythology describes them as having the face and torso of human beings but the lower extremities of serpents.

Of the various racial groups that inhabited India at the time of the advent of the Aryans, the Nagas seem to have been in a sufficiently advanced stage of civilization. There are accounts of many Aryan princes marrying Naga princesses. Arjuna met Uloopi when he was in exile. Uloopi wielded great influence on Babhravahana, the King of Manipur, who was her step-son. Hence her story assumes importance in the Mahabharata.

*Retold by*  
*Kamala Chandrakant*

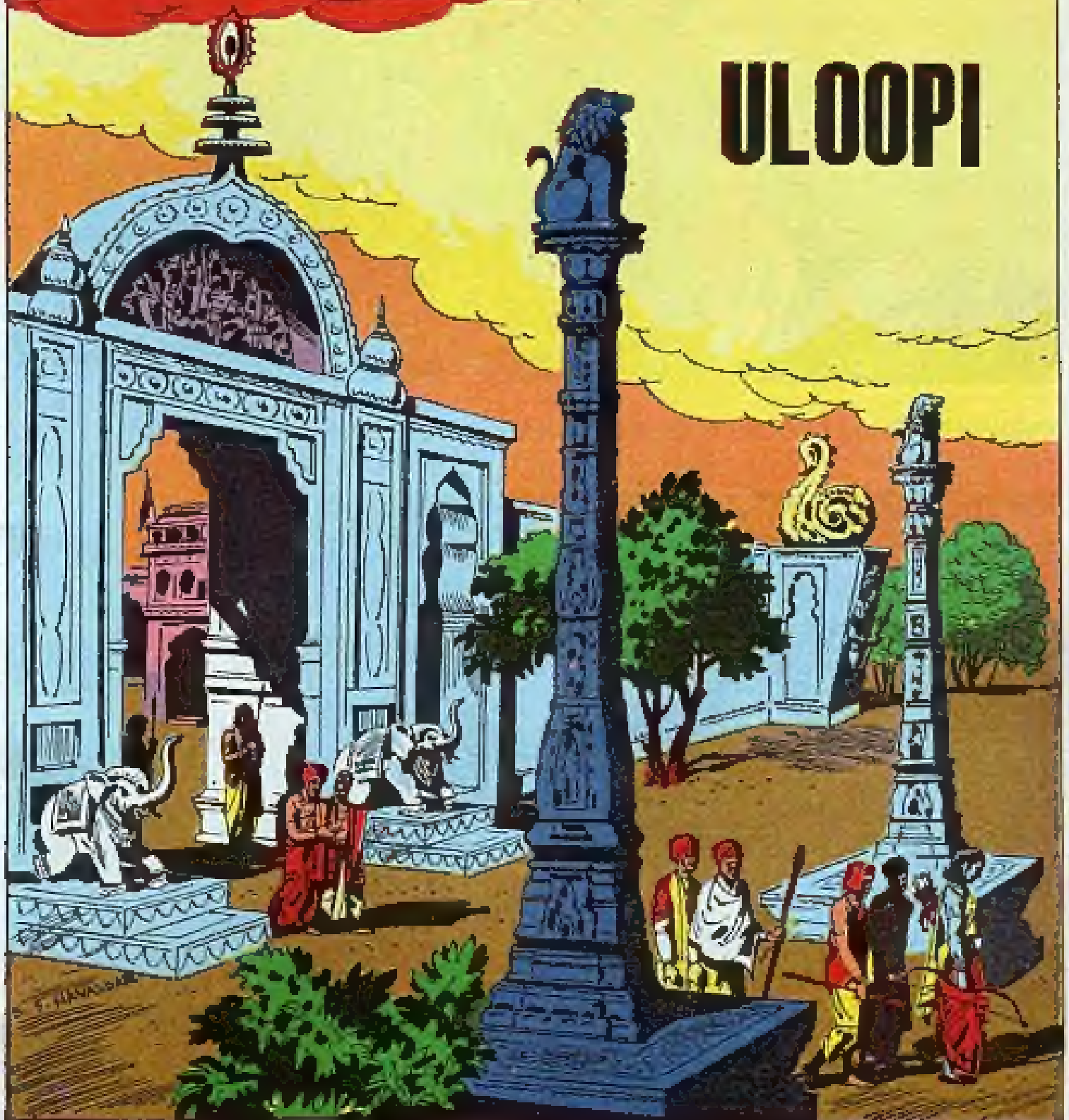
*Artworks*  
*S.S. Hazaldar*



**Editor : Anant Pai**

© India Book House Limited, 1974. Reprinted December 1996  
Published by Anant Pai for India Book House Limited, Fleet Building, Mathuradas Vasanji Road, Marol Naka, Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 059 and printed by him at Prasad Offset Press, Shed B&C5, No. 42, House No. 2, Satiwall, Vasai Kaman Road, Vasai Taluka, Thane District. ISBN No. 81-7508-053-1

# ULOOPI



ARJUNA, THE PANDAVA, ONCE BROKE A YOW. FOR THIS OFFENCE, HE HAD TO GO ON AN EXILE FOR TWELVE YEARS. ACCOMPANIED BY BRAHMAN'S HE SET OUT FROM INDRAPRASTHA, THE CAPITAL.

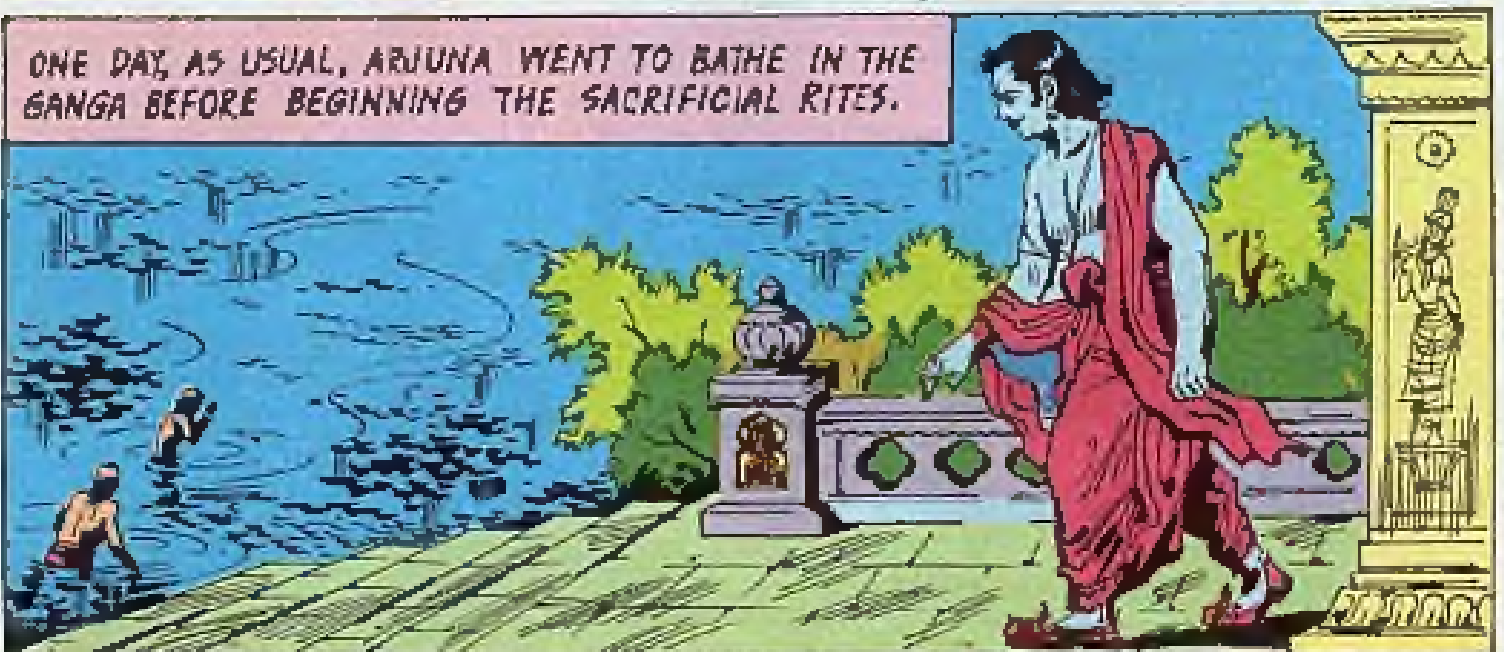
HIS FIRST HALT WAS AT GANGOTRI, THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER GANGA.

WHERE WILL WE GO  
FROM HERE?

I'LL VISIT  
THE HOLY  
PLACES OF  
THE LAND.

WHEREVER HE WENT, ARJUNA PERFORMED THE FIRE SACRIFICE. HE LOOKED UPON  
THIS AS HIS SACRED DUTY. SOMETIMES, A FIRE SACRIFICE CONTINUED FOR MANY DAYS.

ONE DAY, AS USUAL, ARJUNA WENT TO BATHE IN THE  
GANGA BEFORE BEGINNING THE SACRIFICIAL RITES.





AS HE WAS ABOUT TO STEP OUT—



THE BRAHMAN RUSHED FORWARD TO HIS RESCUE.

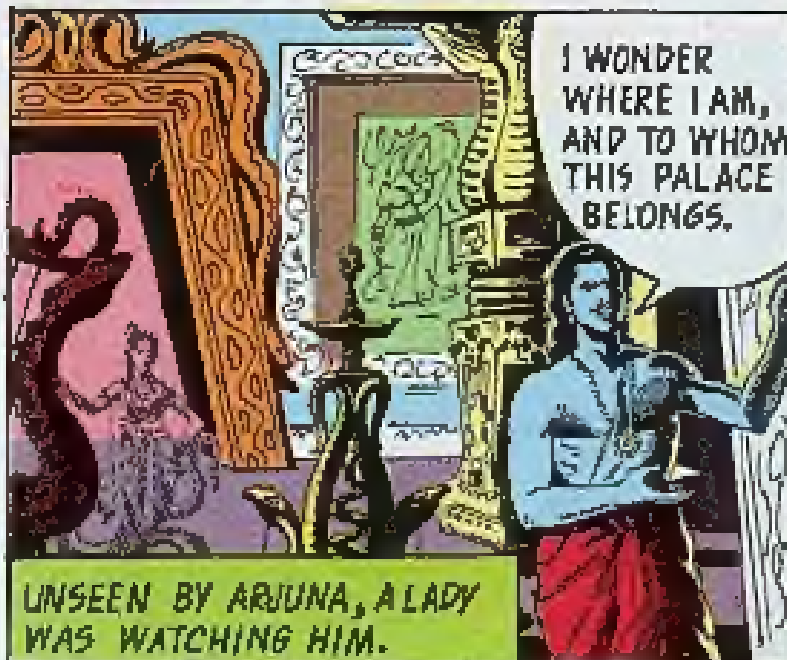


BUT WHEN THEY REACHED THE SPOT, ARJUNA HAD VANISHED FROM SIGHT.

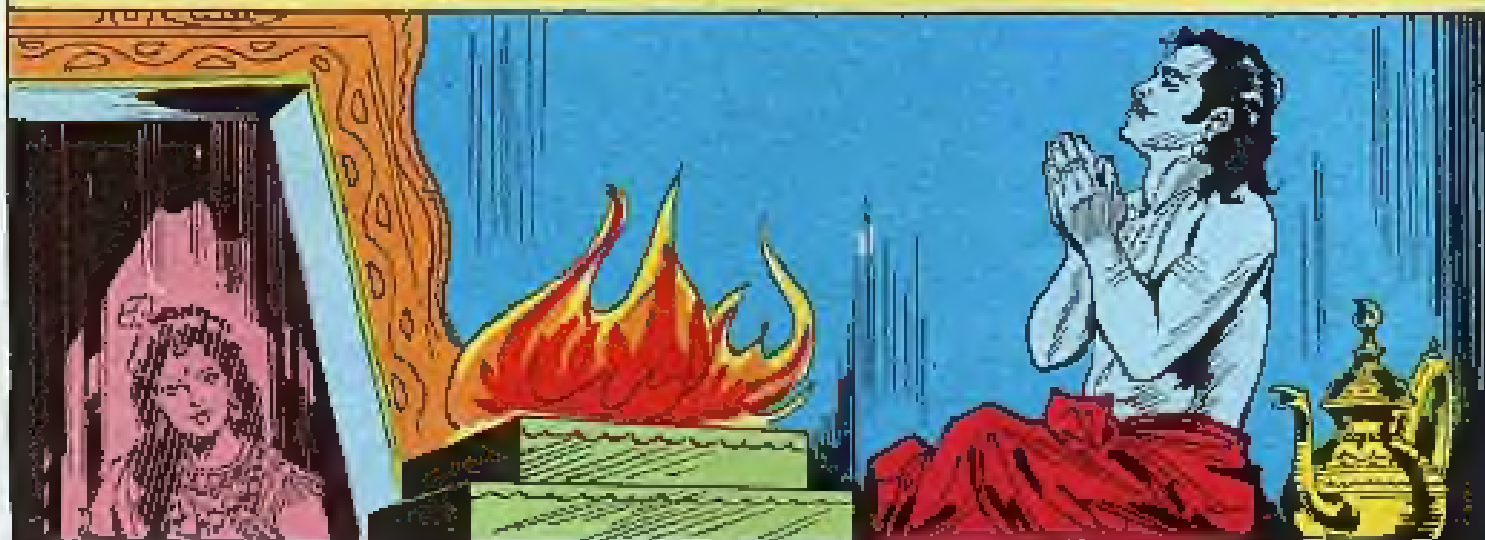


ARJUNA WAS DRAGGED DEEP DOWN INTO THE RIVER TILL HE CAME TO A BEAUTIFUL PALACE.





HE SAT BEFORE THE SACRIFICIAL FIRE AND PERFORMED HIS RITES WITH DEVOTION.



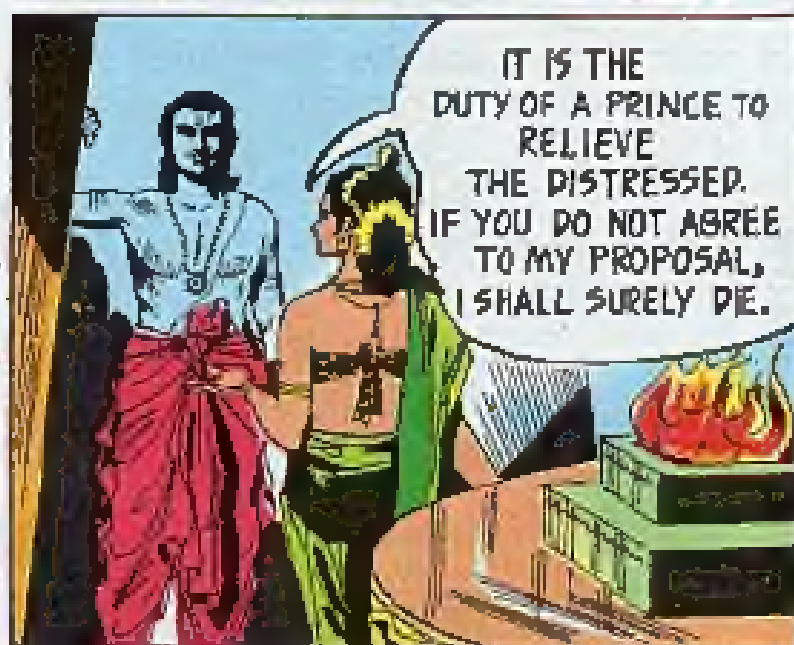


WHY HAVE YOU  
BROUGHT ME HERE?

BECAUSE  
I LOVE YOU.  
PLEASE  
MAKE ME  
YOUR  
WIFE.



HOW CAN  
THAT BE  
POSSIBLE?  
I AM AN  
EXILED  
PRINCE.



IT IS THE  
DUTY OF A PRINCE TO  
RELIEVE  
THE DISTRESSED.  
IF YOU DO NOT AGREE  
TO MY PROPOSAL,  
I SHALL SURELY DIE.



MY FIRE  
SACRIFICE AT  
GANGOTRI IS  
INCOMPLETE.

I WILL TAKE  
YOU BACK TOMORROW.  
BUT PLEASE BE WITH ME  
TODAY.



ARJUNA WAS TOUCHED BY ULOOPI'S  
PLEADINGS.

I'LL DO WHAT  
YOU WISH, DEAR ONE!



THROUGHOUT THE HOURS OF HIS STAY, ULOOPI LOOKED AFTER HIS EVERY NEED WITH TENDERNESS AND AFFECTION.



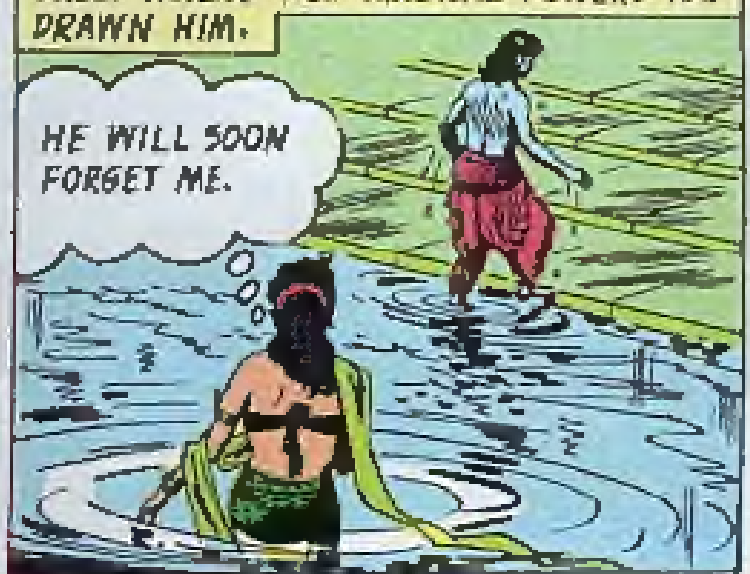
NEXT MORNING—

YOU HAVE SAVED MY LIFE. I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU, MY BELOVED HUSBAND. I SHALL TAKE YOU BACK, AS I PROMISED.



ULOOPI LED ARJUNA BACK TO THE SPOT FROM WHERE HER MAGICAL POWERS HAD DRAWN HIM.

HE WILL SOON FORGET ME.



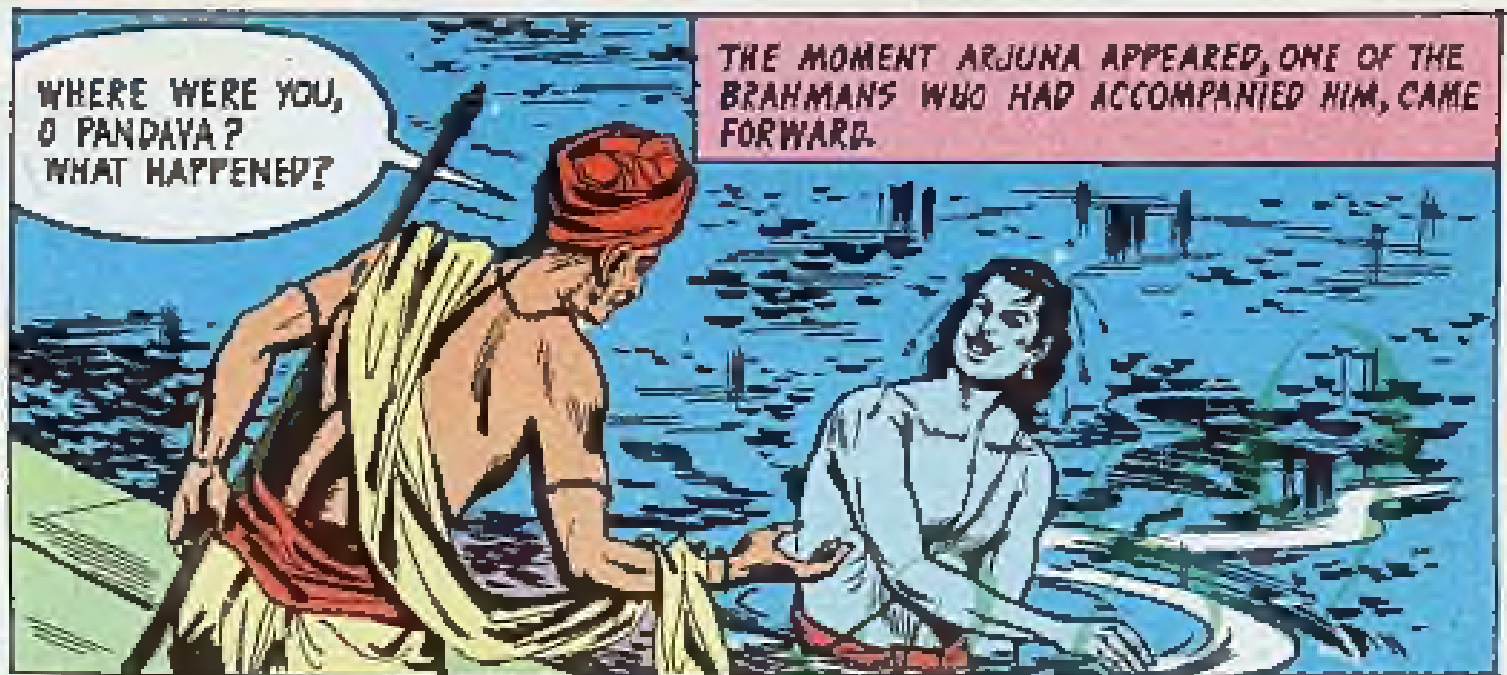
AS ARJUNA EMERGED FROM THE WATER...



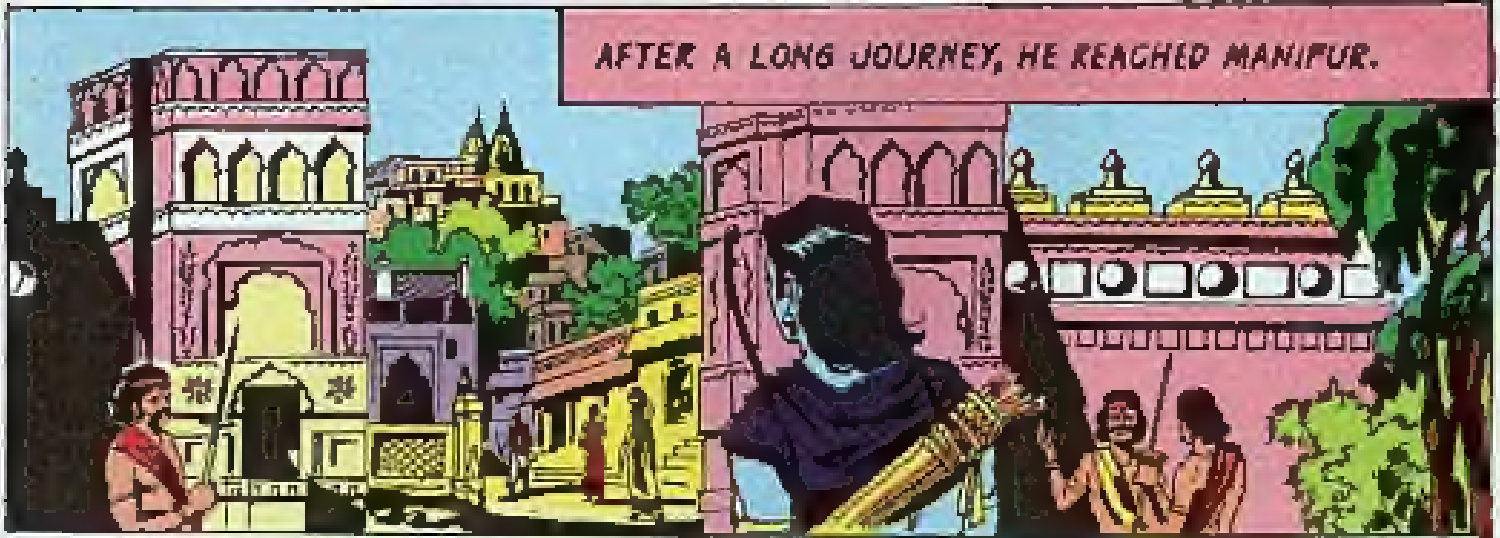
WHERE IS SHE?  
WHERE HAS SHE  
GONE?

...UNABLE TO BEAR THE GRIEF OF PARTING, ULOOPI HAD DISAPPEARED.





AFTER A LONG JOURNEY, HE REACHED MANIPUR.



AS HE  
WANDERED ON  
HE CAME UPON  
A PALACE.

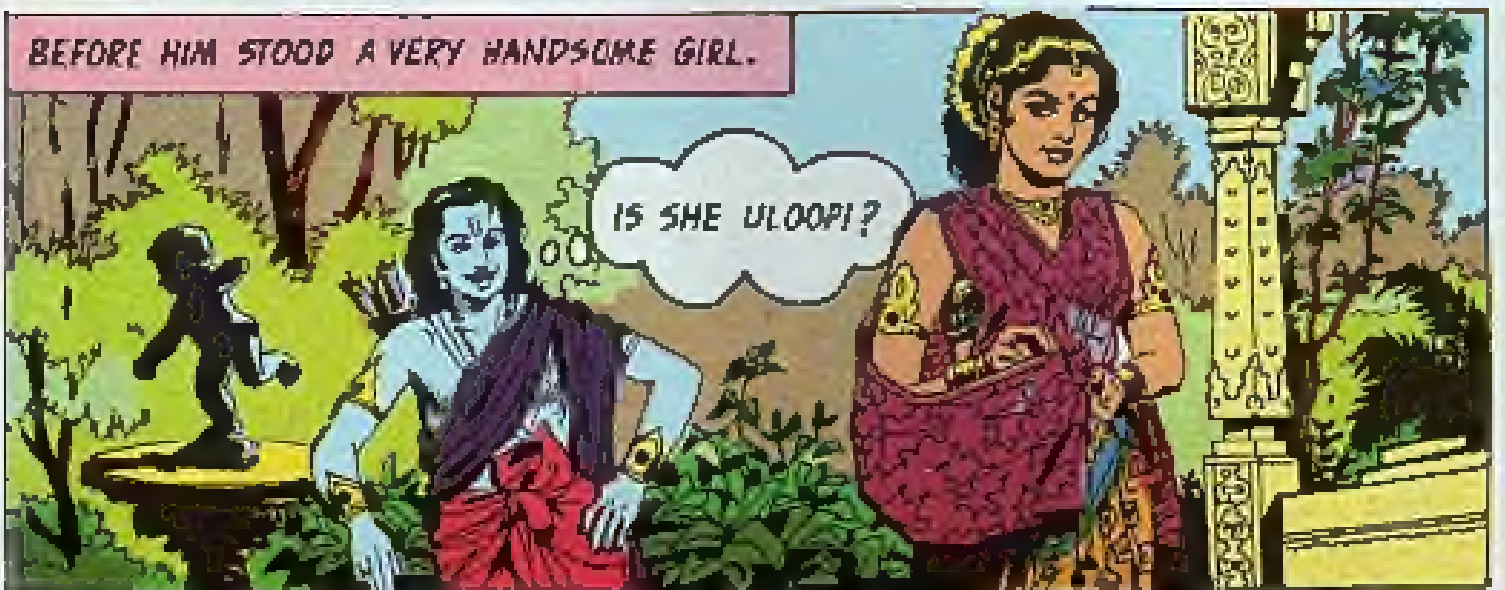


HE ENTERED THE PALACE GARDENS...



...AND SUDDENLY STOPPED.

BEFORE HIM STOOD A VERY HANDSOME GIRL.

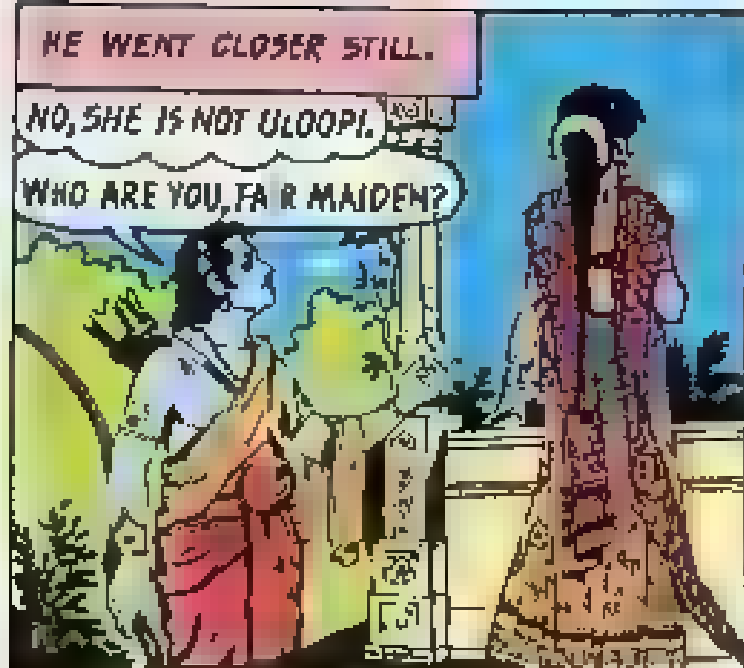


IS SHE ULOOPI?

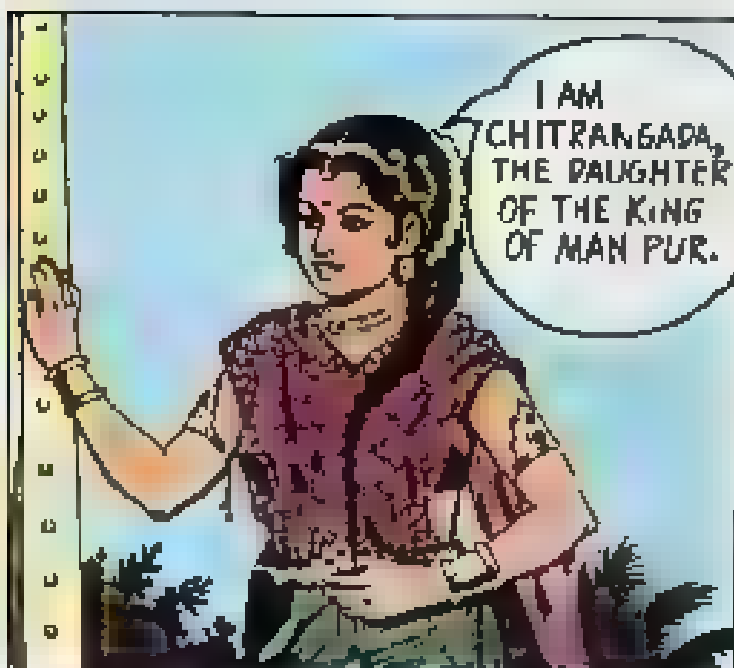
HE WENT CLOSER STILL.

NO, SHE IS NOT ULOOPI.

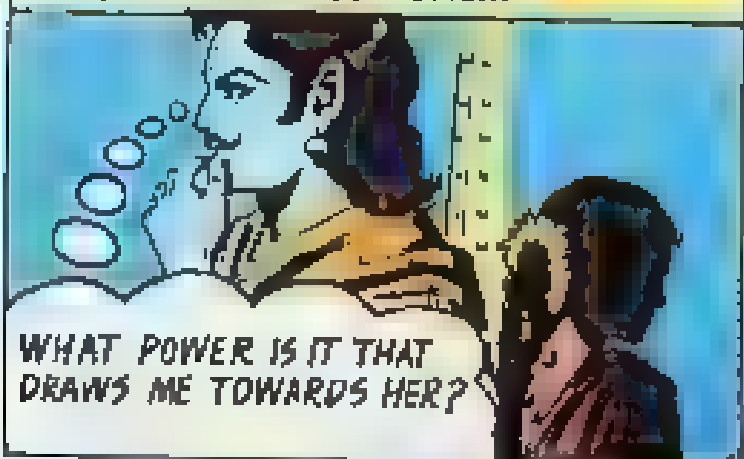
WHO ARE YOU, FAIR MAIDEN?



I AM  
CHITRANGADA,  
THE DAUGHTER  
OF THE KING  
OF MAN PUR.



THEN CHITRANGADA SUDDENLY TURNED HER  
FACE, BLUSHING IN CONFUSION.



WHAT POWER IS IT THAT  
DRAWS ME TOWARDS HER?

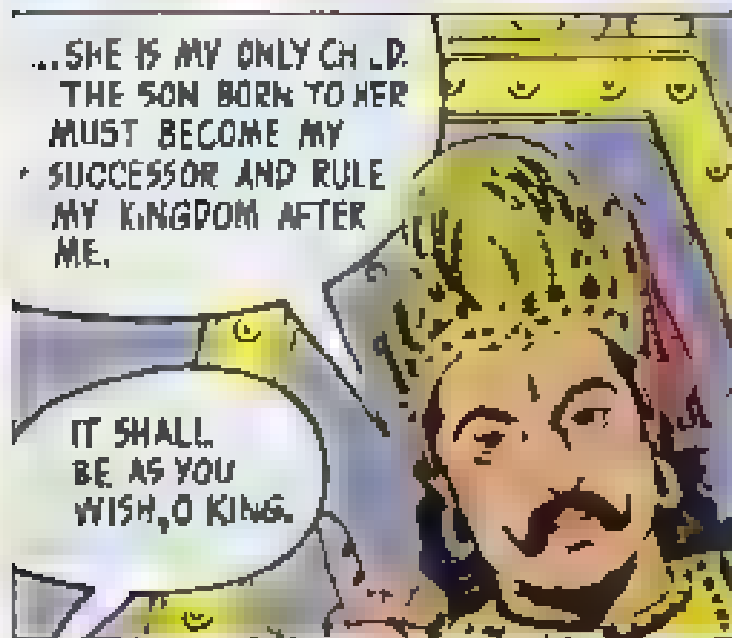
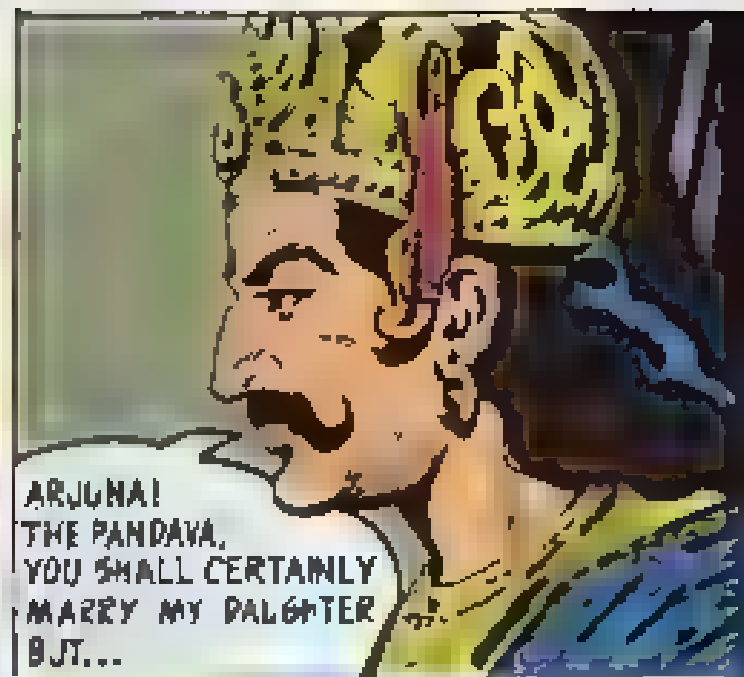
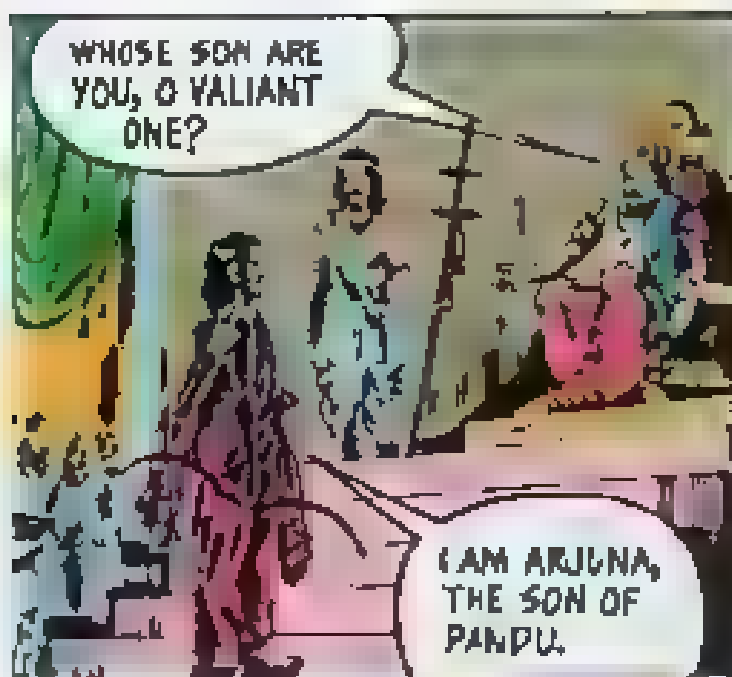
I SHALL SEEK AN  
AUDIENCE WITH THE  
KING.



LATER, AT THE COURT—

O KING! I AM A NOBLE  
KSHATRIYA'S SON. I WISH  
TO MARRY YOUR  
DAUGHTER.

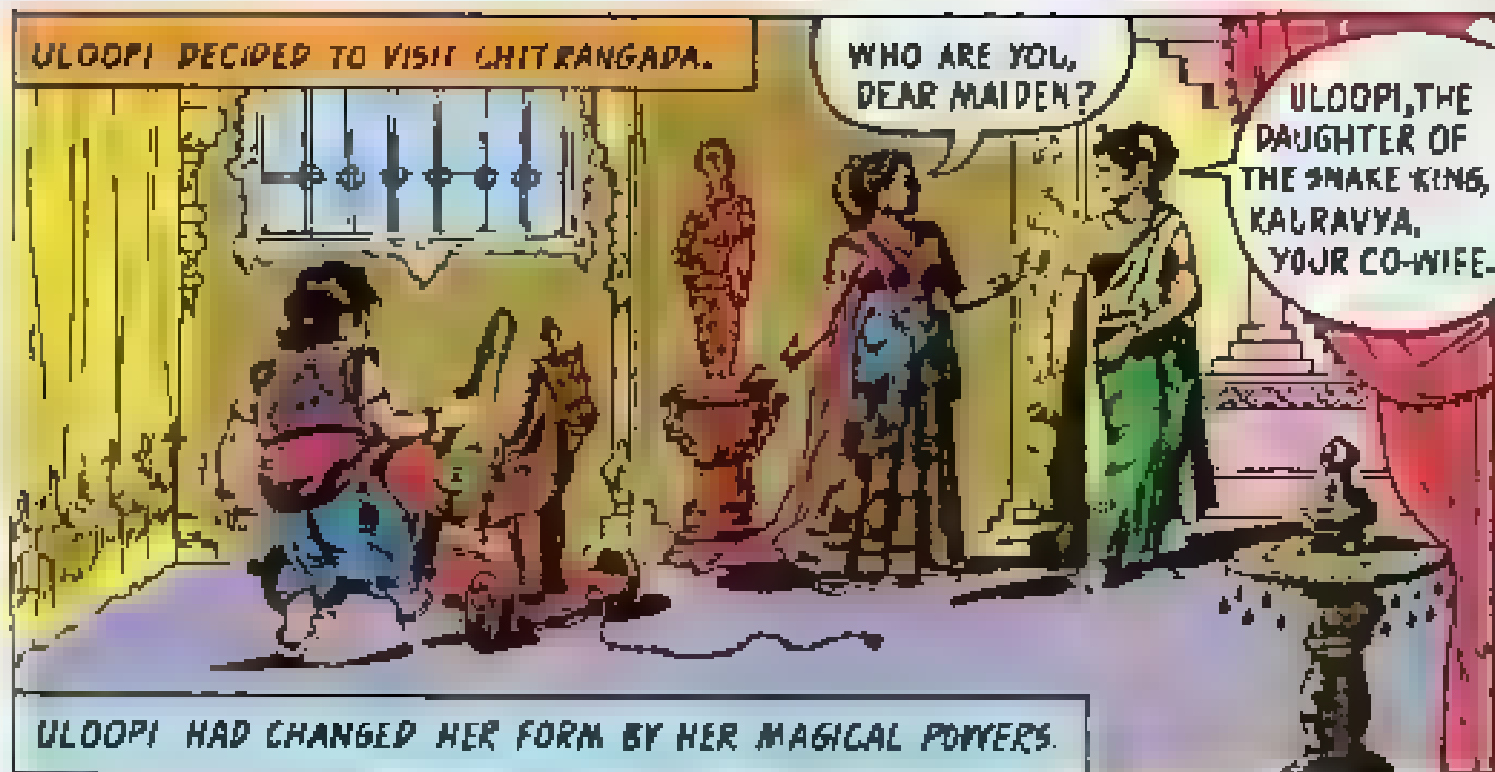








ULOOP! DECIDED TO VISIT CHITRANGADA.



WHO ARE YOU,  
DEAR MAIDEN?

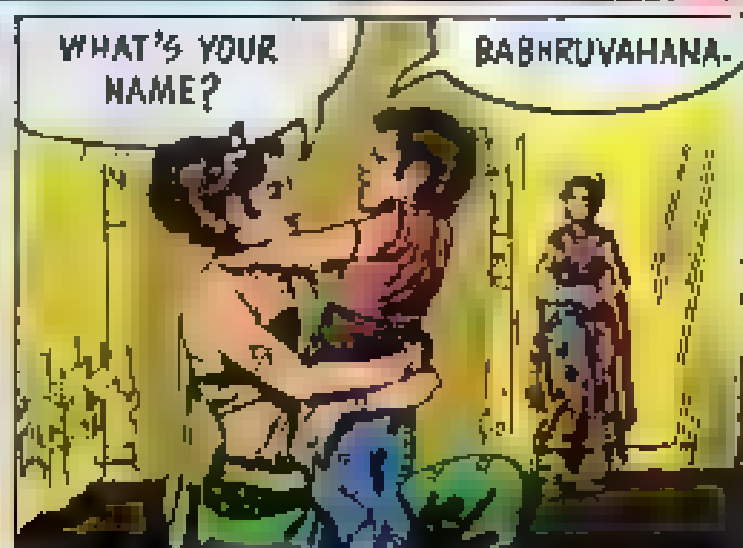
ULOOP!, THE  
DAUGHTER OF  
THE SNAKE KING,  
KALRAYYA,  
YOUR CO-WIFE.

ULOOP! HAD CHANGED HER FORM BY HER MAGICAL POWERS.



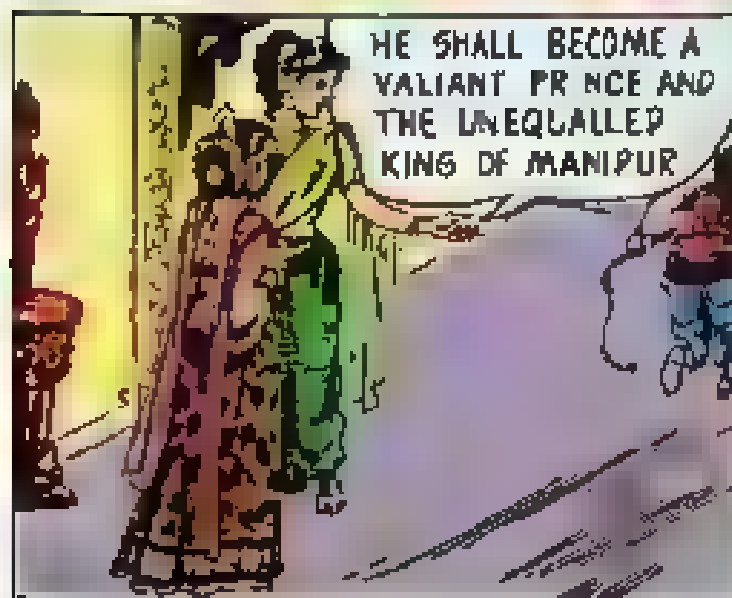
I SUPPOSE, THIS  
IS OUR SON

YES.



WHAT'S YOUR  
NAME?

BABHRUVAHANA.



HE SHALL BECOME A  
VALIANT PRINCE AND  
THE UNEQUALLED  
KING OF MANIPUR



SOON--

I HAVE TO LEAVE  
NOW, BUT I SHALL  
OFTEN COME TO  
VISIT HIM.

WE SHALL AWAIT  
YOUR VISITS WITH  
PLEASURE, DEAR  
SISTER.

AS BABHUVANANA GREW UP, ULOOPI, TRUE TO HER WORD, OFTEN VISITED.  
SHE WIELDED A GREAT INFLUENCE OVER HIM.



ULOOPI TOLD HIM STORIES ABOUT ARJUNA'S ACHIEVEMENTS.



AND WHEN BABHRUVAHANA BECAME KING, AFTER HIS GRANDFATHER'S DEATH HE BECAME A FIT SUCCESSOR.



ULOOPI'S VISITS TO MANJUR CONTINUED.



YOU HAVE MAGICAL POWERS, O MOTHER! TELL ME, HOW IS MY FATHER?

YOUR FATHER AND UNCLAS HAVE LOST THEIR KINGDOM TO THE R COUSINS, THE KAJRAVAS, IN A GAME OF RICE

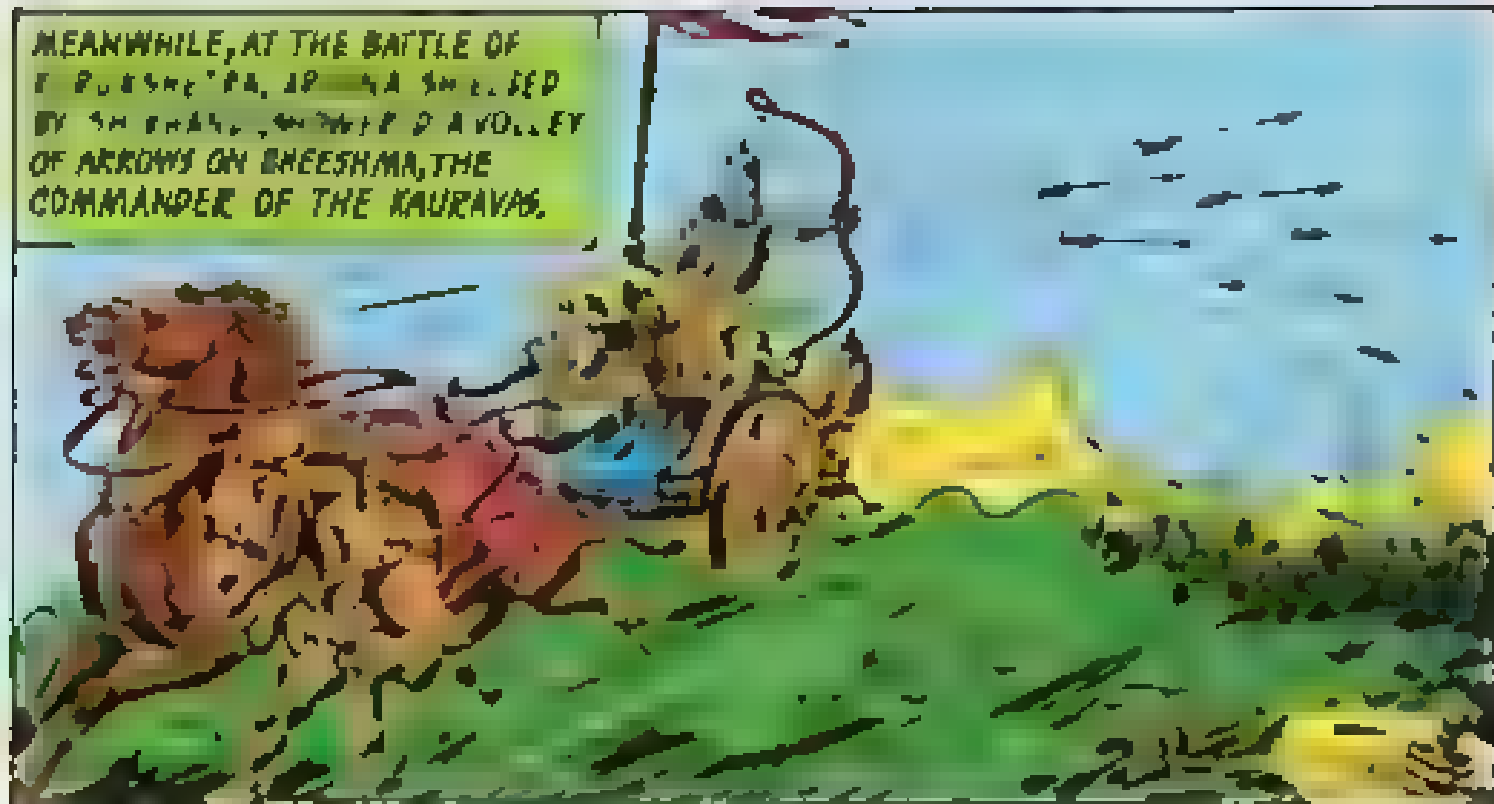
ONE DAY—

NOW YOUR FATHER IS PREPARING FOR THE BATTLE AGAINST THE KAJRAVAS. IT IS TIME I LEFT.





MEANWHILE, AT THE BATTLE OF  
KURUKSHETRA, ARJUNA SHOT  
BY SHRAVANA, A WHOLE RAINBOW  
OF ARROWS ON BHEESHMA, THE  
COMMANDER OF THE KURUVAAS.



BHEESHMA FELL, WOUNDED.



ALL THE CELESTIALS HAD  
GATHERED IN THE SKY TO WITNESS  
THE BATTLE.



AMONG THEM WERE THE VASUS, THE BROTHERS OF  
DEVA.

THAT WAS UNFAIR

ARJUNA SHOULD  
BE PUNISHED.



THE VASUS WENT TO GANGA, THEIR MOTHER.

ARJUNA HAS SINNED.  
FOR THIS HE SHOULD  
GO TO HELL WHEN  
HE DIES.

SO BE IT.

ULOPI, UNOBSERVED, HEARD EVERYTHING.

MY HUSBAND DOES NOT  
DESERVE SUCH A FATE.  
WORSE SINS HAVE  
BEEN COMMITTED ON  
THE BATTLEFIELD OF  
KURUKSHETRA.

SHE WENT TO HER FATHER, KAURAVYA

FATHER, PLEASE  
SAVE MY HUSBAND  
FROM HELL.

DON'T WORRY,  
MY CHILD.

KAURAVYA PROPITIATED THE  
VASUS.

WHAT BOON DO YOU  
SEEK, KAURAVYA?

LET THE CURSE ON  
ARJUNA BE LIFTED!

THE CURSE WILL  
BE REDEEMED IF  
ARJUNA IS KILLED IN  
BATTLE BY HIS SON,  
BABHRUVAHANA.

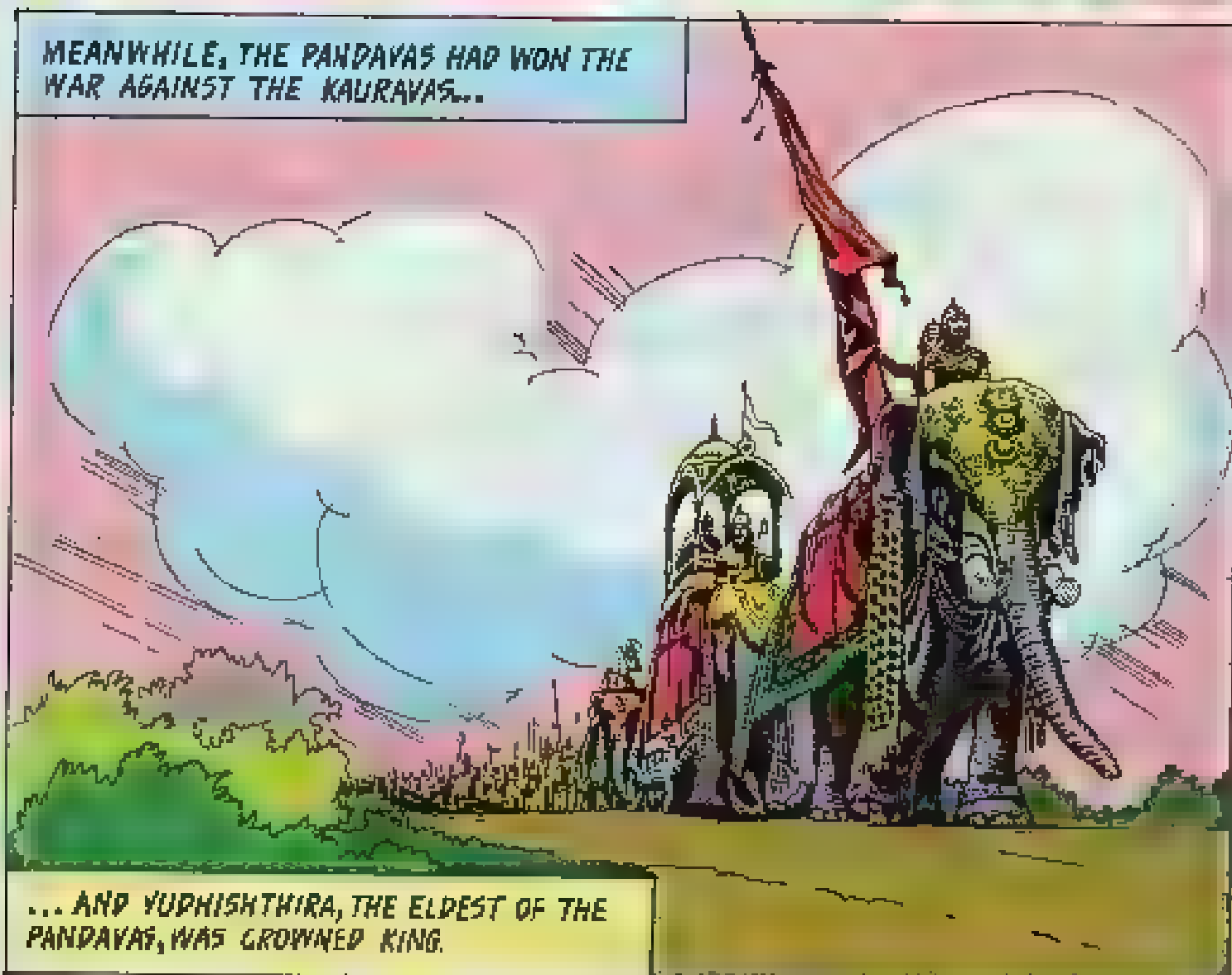


KAURAVYA CAME BACK TO HIS  
DAUGHTER AND TOLD HER ABOUT IT.

THAT IS BAD  
WHEN THE TIME  
COMES, I WILL HAVE  
TO BE THERE TO SAVE  
MY HUSBAND.



MEANWHILE, THE PANDAVAS HAD WON THE  
WAR AGAINST THE KAURAVAS...



... AND YUDHISHTHIRA, THE ELDEST OF THE  
PANDAVAS, WAS CROWNED KING.

SOON AFTERWARDS, YUDHISHTHIRA DECIDED TO PERFORM THE HORSE SACRIFICE.



WHEN THE HORSE FOR THE SACRIFICE WAS SELECTED—



ARJUNA,  
YOU WILL  
PROTECT THE  
HORSE YOU  
ALONE CAN  
DO IT.

LET THE  
HORSE WANDER  
AT WILL OVER THE  
WHOLE EARTH,  
PROCLAIMING YOUR  
GLORY, O KING!

AS THE HORSE WAS LET LOOSE  
AND ARJUNA PREPARED TO FOLLOW  
HIM—



THAT IS THE HORSE. IT WILL ROAM  
ABOUT IN DISTANT LANDS. IF  
ANY KING STOPS IT, HE WILL  
HAVE TO FIGHT WITH ARJUNA  
AND HIS ARMY.

AND IF A KING  
PERMITS THAT  
HORSE TO ROAM  
IN HIS KINGDOM,  
HE ACKNOWLEDGES  
YUDHISHTHIRA AS  
HIS SUPERIOR.

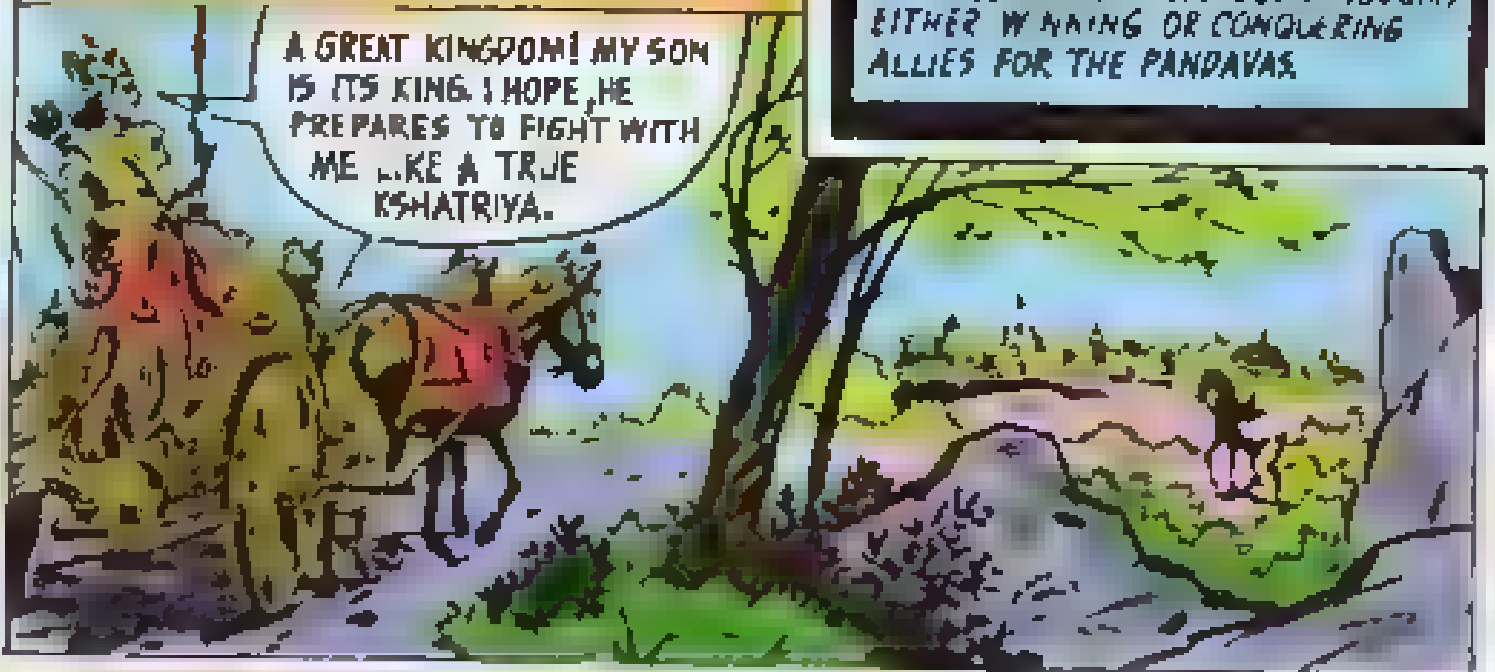




AT LAST, THE HORSE ARRIVED AT THE KINGDOM OF MANIPUR.

ARJUNA FOLLOWED THE SACRIFICIAL HORSE AS IT WANDERED AT WILL THROUGH VARIOUS KINGDOMS EITHER WINNING OR CONQUERING ALLIES FOR THE PANDAVAS.

A GREAT KINGDOM! MY SON IS ITS KING. I HOPE HE PREPARES TO FIGHT WITH ME LIKE A TRUE KSHATRIYA.



BUT BABHRUVAHANA CAME FORWARD TO WELCOME HIM

FATHER, I AM PROUD TO BE YOUR SON. I WELCOME YOU TO MY KINGDOM.



OH KING! THIS IS NOT PROPER. YOU HAVE FAILED IN YOUR DUTIES.



BABHRUVAHANA WAS STUNNED BY THESE WORDS.

HOW CAN I FIGHT MY BELOVED FATHER?



JUST THEN, ULOOPI ARRIVED ON THE SCENE.

DO AS I TELL YOU, MY SON.  
DO NOT HESITATE. FIGHT  
YOUR FATHER. IT IS THE  
ONLY RIGHTEDUS AND  
DUTIFUL THING FOR YOU  
TO DO.

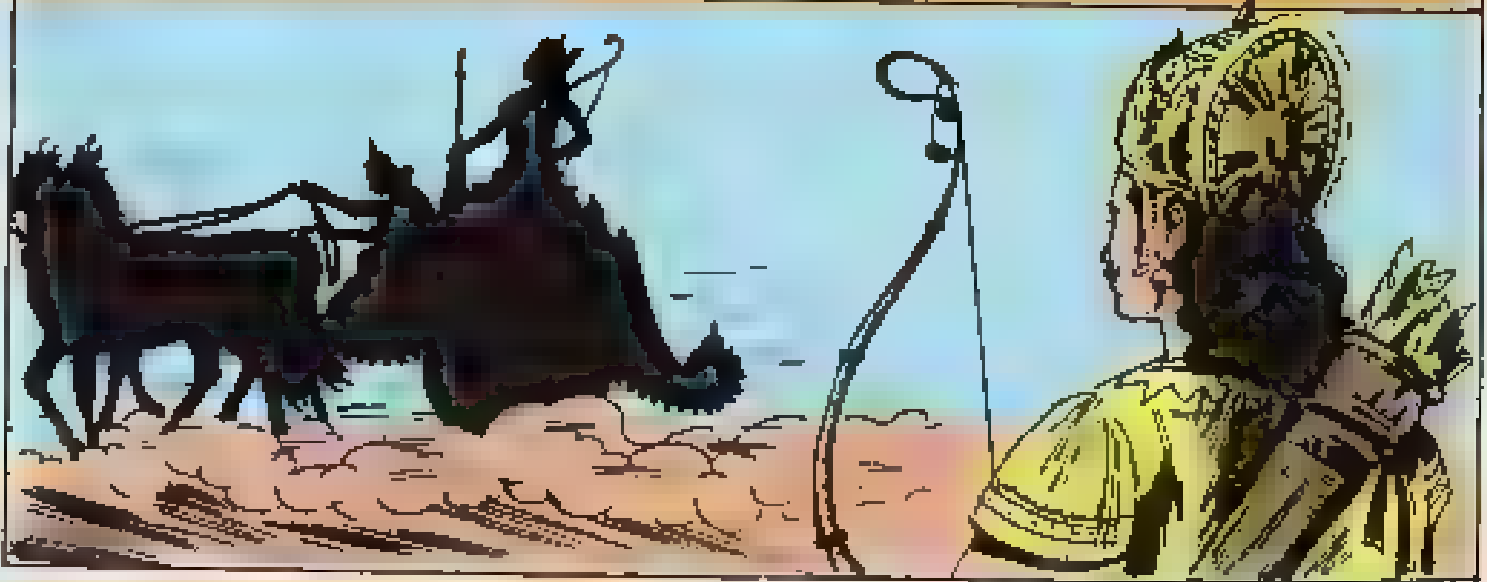


BABHRUVAHANA THOUGHT FOR A WHILE.

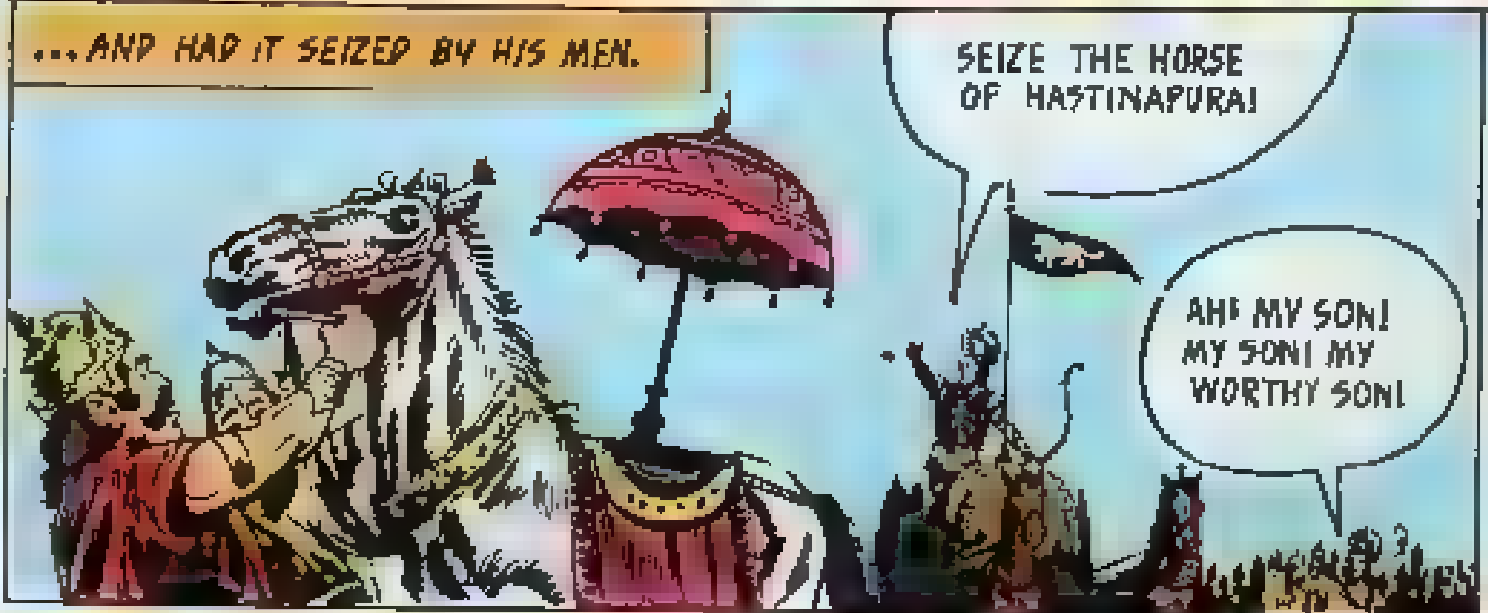
I HAVE LOST MY  
FATHER'S RESPECT.  
I CAN WIN IT BACK ONLY  
BY FIGHTING HIM. I WILL  
FIGHT.



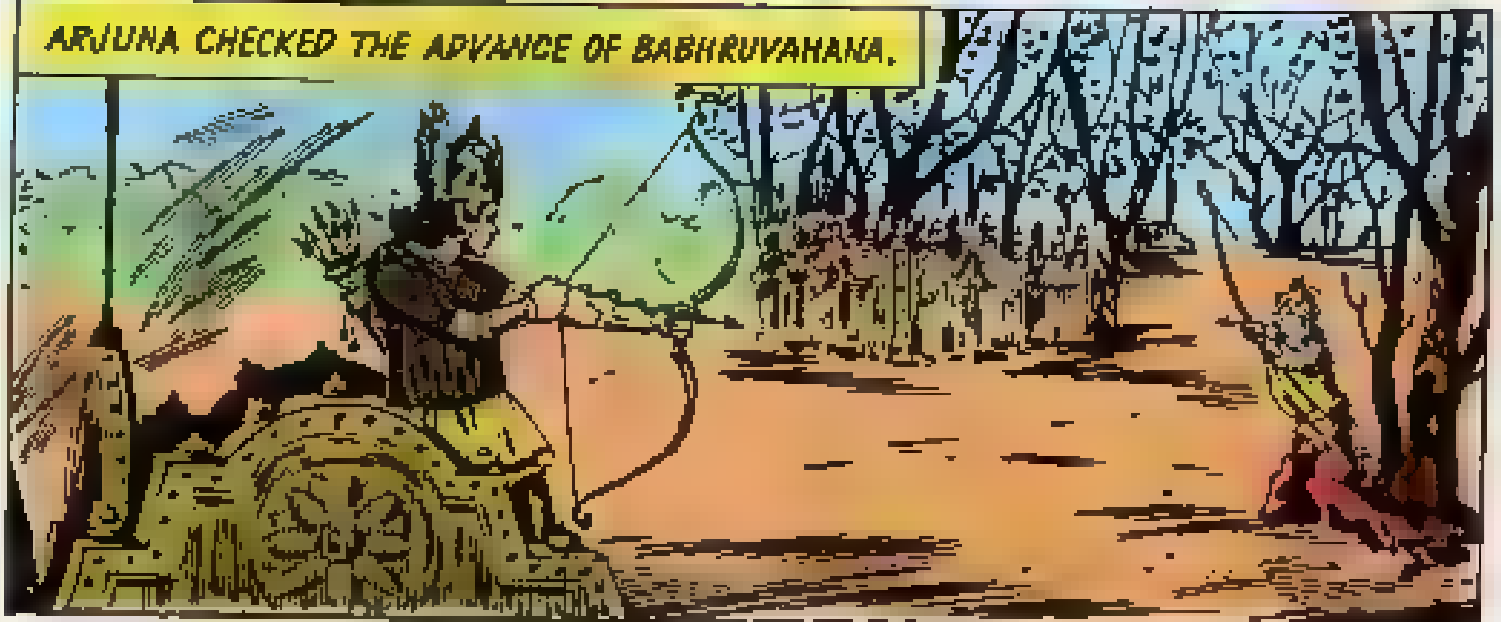
HE PUT ON HIS ARMOUR, MOUNTED HIS CHARIOT, DROVE UP TO THE SACRIFICIAL HORSE...



...AND HAD IT SEIZED BY HIS MEN.



ARJUNA CHECKED THE ADVANCE OF BABHRUVAHANA.



AN ARROW SENT BY BABHRUVAHANA  
PIERCED ARJUNA THROUGH THE SHOULDER.



WEAK WITH PAIN, ARJUNA RESTED  
AWHILE LEANING AGAINST HIS BOW,  
LOOKING ALMOST DEAD.



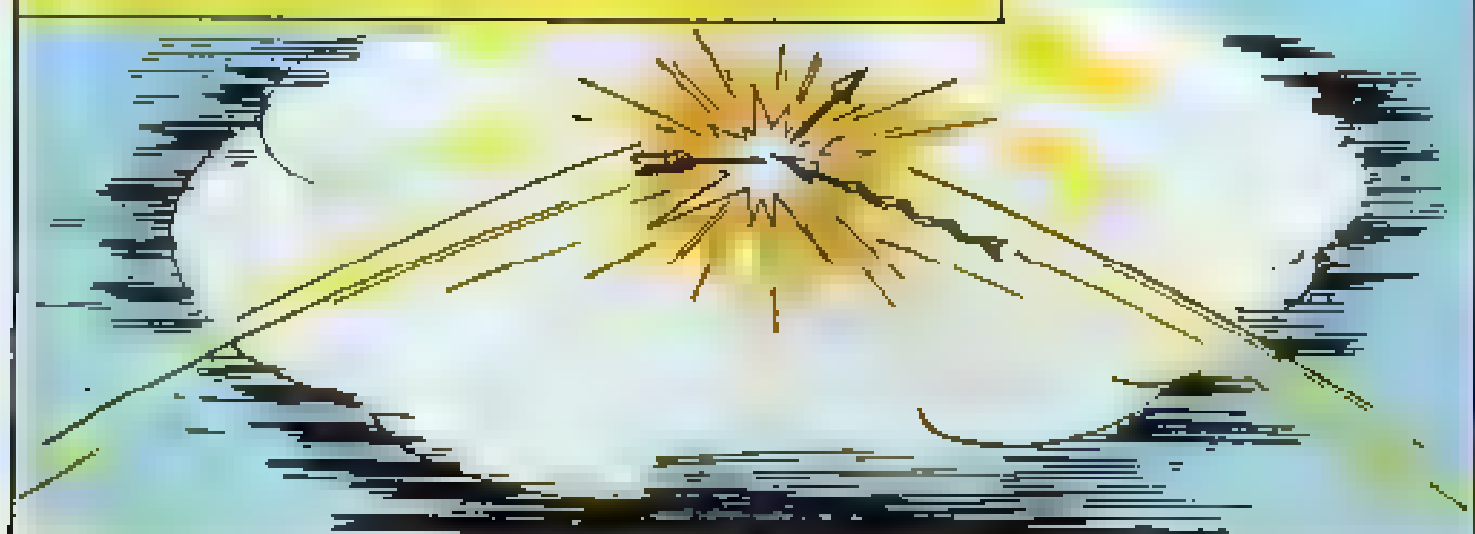
THEN AS HIS STRENGTH CAME BACK TO  
HIM



NOW FACE MY ARROWS  
AND FIGHT WITHOUT  
RUNNING AWAY.



BUT BABHRUVAHANA CUT ARJUNA'S ARROWS INTO BITS.





ARJUNA CUT OFF THE STANDARD ON  
BABHRUVAHANA'S CHARIOT AND...



... KILLED THE HORSES.



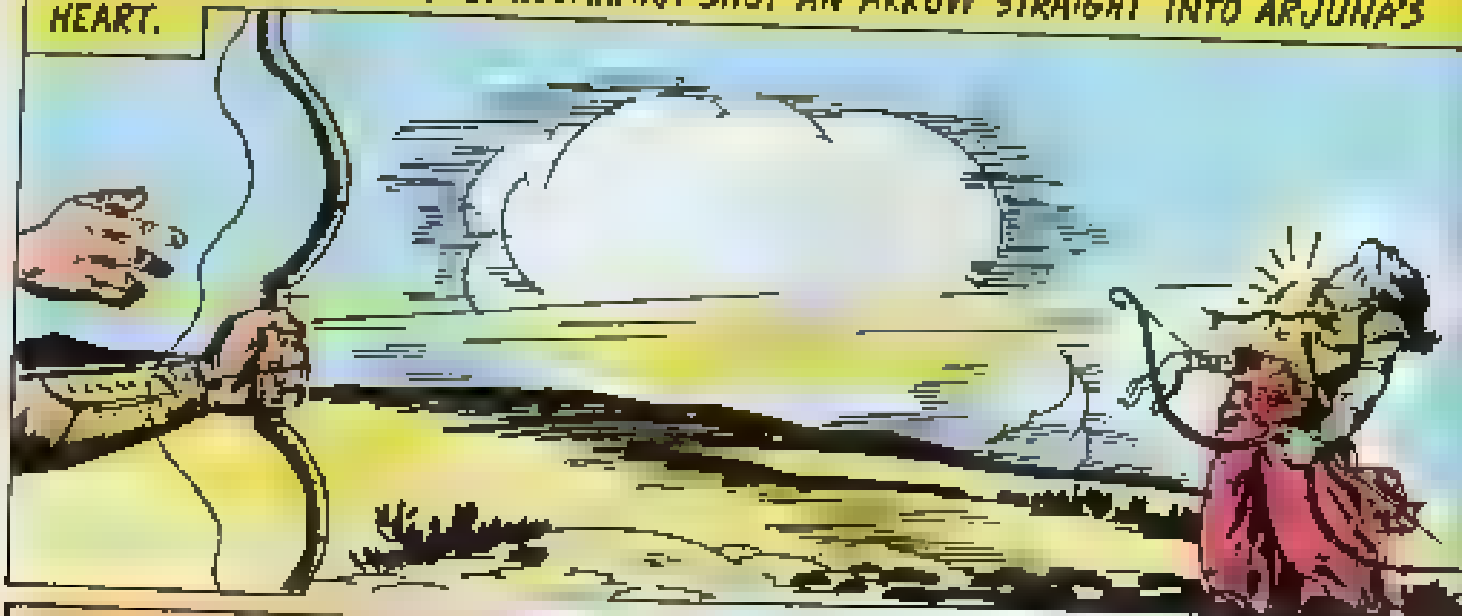
INFURIATED, BABHRUVAHANA GOT DOWN  
FROM HIS CHARIOT AND FOUGHT HIS  
FATHER ON FOOT.



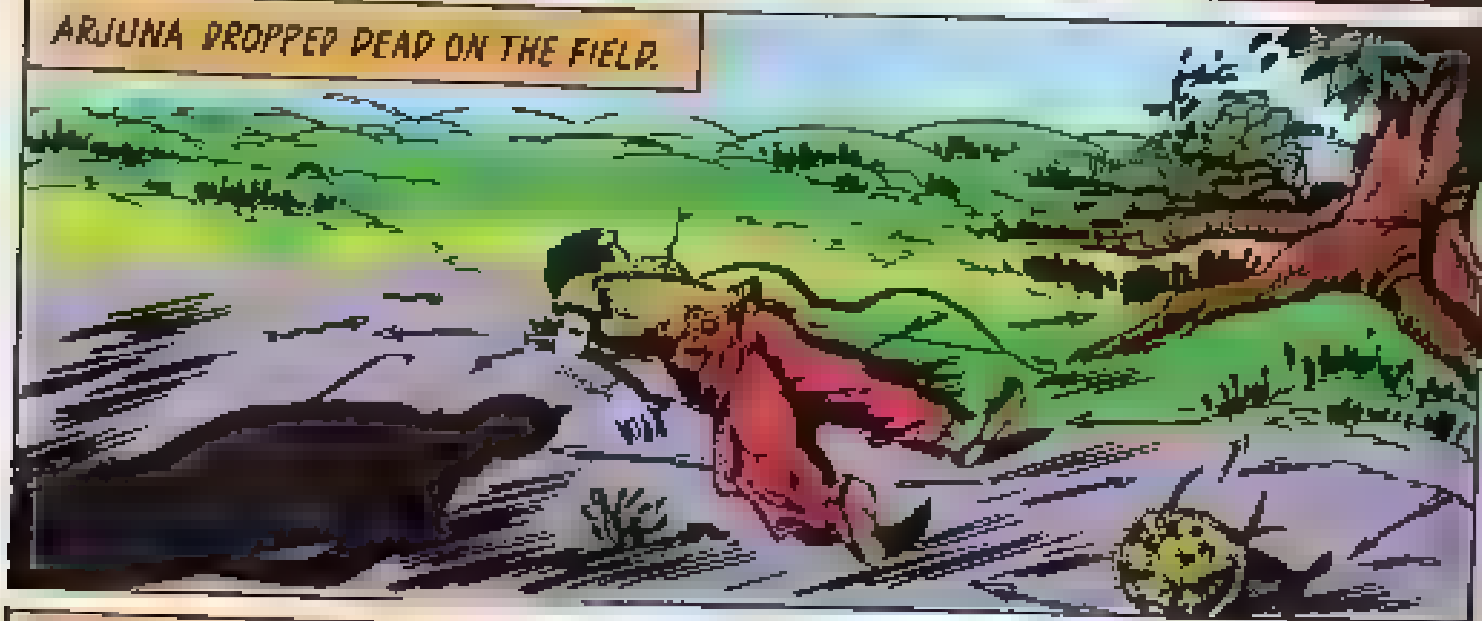
ARJUNA ATTACKED HIM RELENTLESSLY  
TILL...



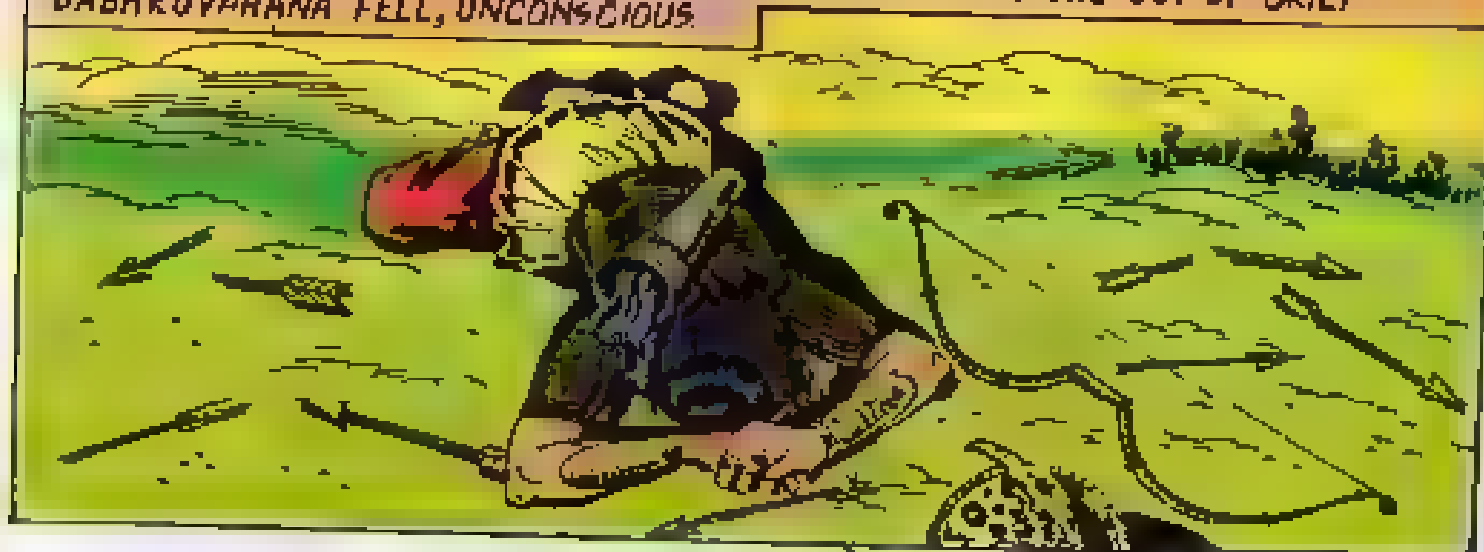
... BLINDED BY RAGE BABHRUVAHANA SHOT AN ARROW STRAIGHT INTO ARJUNA'S HEART.



ARJUNA DROPPED DEAD ON THE FIELD.



AT THE SAME MOMENT PARTLY THROUGH EXERTION BUT MORE OUT OF GRIEF BABHRUVAHANA FELL, UNCONSCIOUS.



AND ALL THE TIME ULDOPI STOOD WATCHING THE SCENE, UNPERTURBED, A PICTURE OF SERENITY.



A MESSENGER RAN TO CHITRANGADA.

I HAVE SAD NEWS FOR YOU. YOUR HUSBAND HAS BEEN KILLED BY THE KING WHO HIMSELF NOW LIES IN A SWOON.



CHITRANGADA TURNED PALE.

TAKE ME TO THE BATTLEFIELD.



AT THE BATTLEFIELD—



WHEN SHE CAME TO HER SENSES, SHE SAW ULDOPI.

O ULDOPI! I KNOW HOW DEVOTED YOU ARE TO OUR HUSBAND. YET I DO NOT FIND YOU GRIEVING.

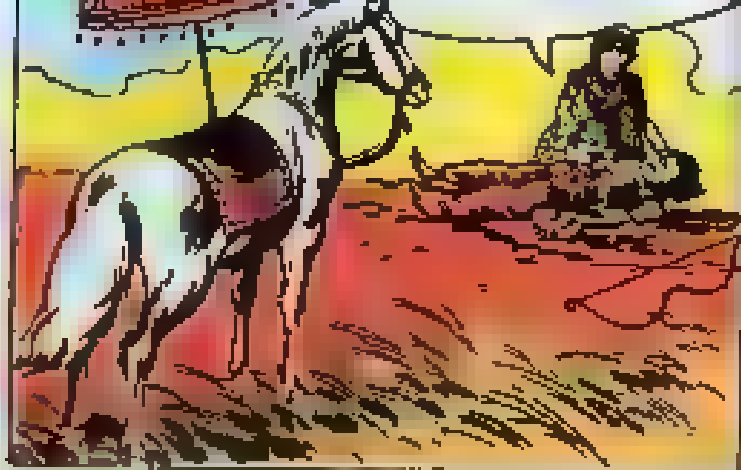


WHEN ULLOPI SHOWED NO SIGN OF EMOTION, CHITRANGADA WENT TO ARJUNA.

RISE, DEAR HUSBAND,  
HERE IS THAT  
HORSE OF YOURS.



I HAVE SET IT FREE. YOU  
MUST FOLLOW IT AND PROTECT  
IT. RISE, DEAR HUSBAND, AND  
FULFILL YOUR DUTY.



SHE FOUND THAT ALL HER ATTEMPTS TO  
REVIVE ARJUNA WERE IN VAIN, SO SHE  
TURNED TO ULLOPI.

BRING HIM BACK  
TO LIFE, DEAR  
ULLOPI. I KNOW  
YOU CAN

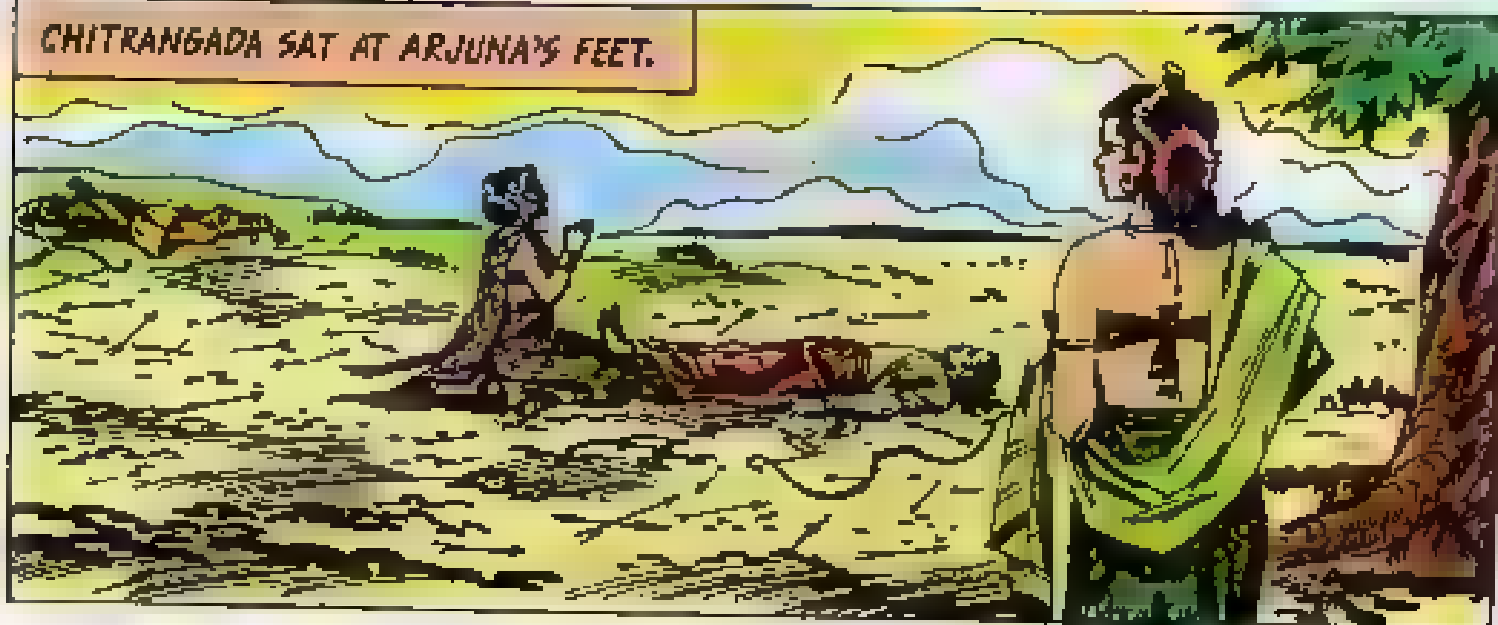


BUT ULLOPI REMAINED UNMOVED.

IF YOU DON'T, I  
SHALL GIVE UP MY  
LIFE.

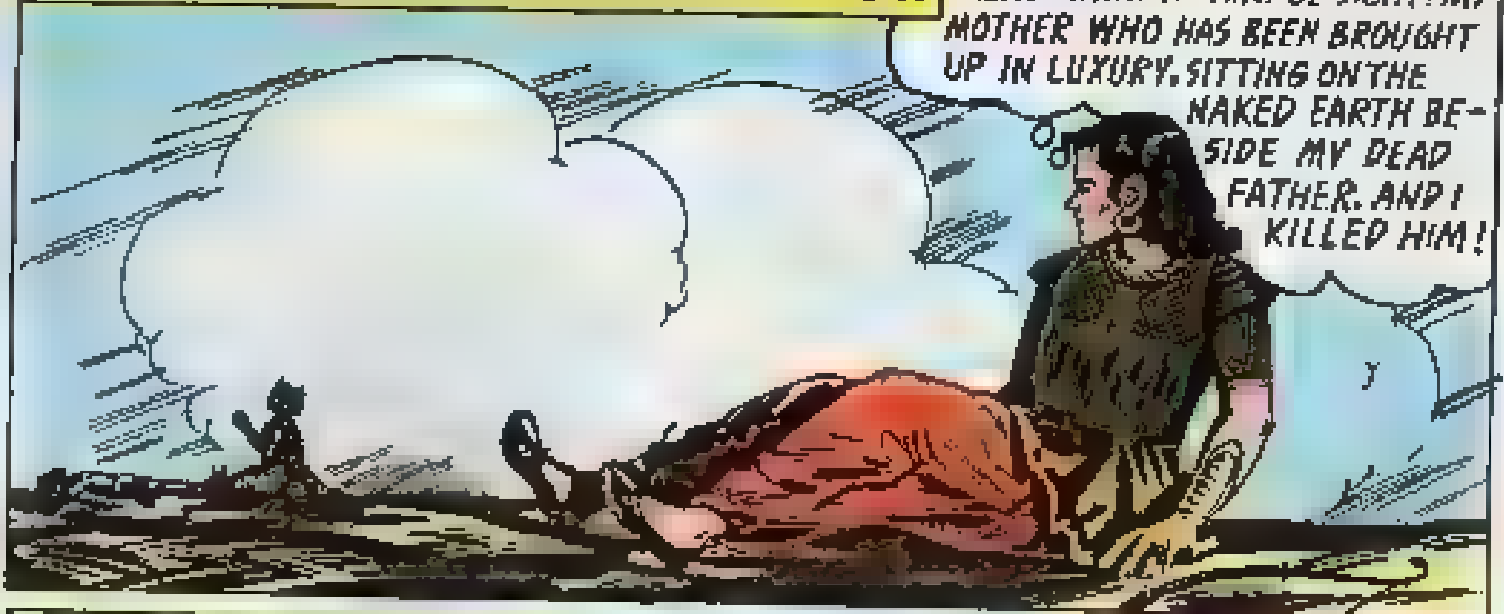


CHITRANGADA SAT AT ARJUNA'S FEET.



JUST THEN BABHRUYAHANA REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS.

ALAS! WHAT A PAINFUL SIGHT! MY MOTHER WHO HAS BEEN BROUGHT UP IN LUXURY, SITTING ON THE NAKED EARTH BESIDE MY DEAD FATHER. AND I KILLED HIM!



THEN HIS GAZE FELL ON ULLOPI.

O MOTHER! YOUR HEART SEEMS TO BE VERY HARD. IT DOES NOT BREAK EVEN ON SEEING YOUR HUSBAND LYING DEAD BEFORE YOU!



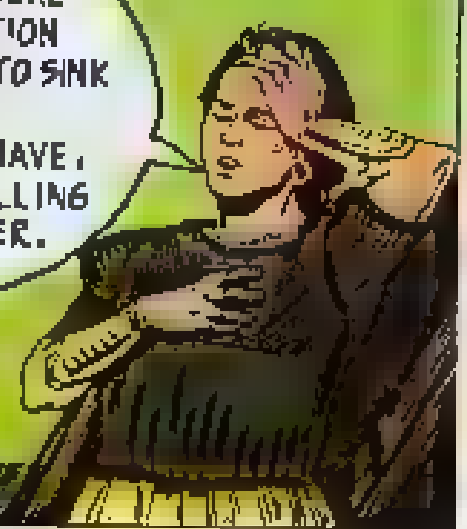
ULLOPI HEARD THESE ACCUSATIONS IN SILENCE.



WHY SHOULD IT? BY KILLING ARJUNA IN BATTLE I HAVE DONE WHAT YOU WANTED OF ME



BUT FOR ME THERE IS NO REDEMPTION I SHALL HAVE TO SINK INTO HELL, SO DREADFULLY HAVE, SINNED IN KILLING MY OWN FATHER.





BABHRUVAHANA WAS STRUCKEN WITH GRIEF



LISTEN MOTHER,  
IF MY FATHER DOES  
NOT COME BACK  
TO LIFE, I SHALL  
FOLLOW HIM.

I SHALL STARVE MYSELF TO DEATH  
RIGHT HERE ON THE BATTLEFIELD,  
NEXT TO MY FATHER. REJOICE  
MOTHER! YOUR SON TOO WILL  
DIE BEFORE YOUR EYES.



AND BABHRUVAHANA SAT NEXT  
TO HIS PARENTS



ULOOFI WATCHED THE THREE OF THEM.



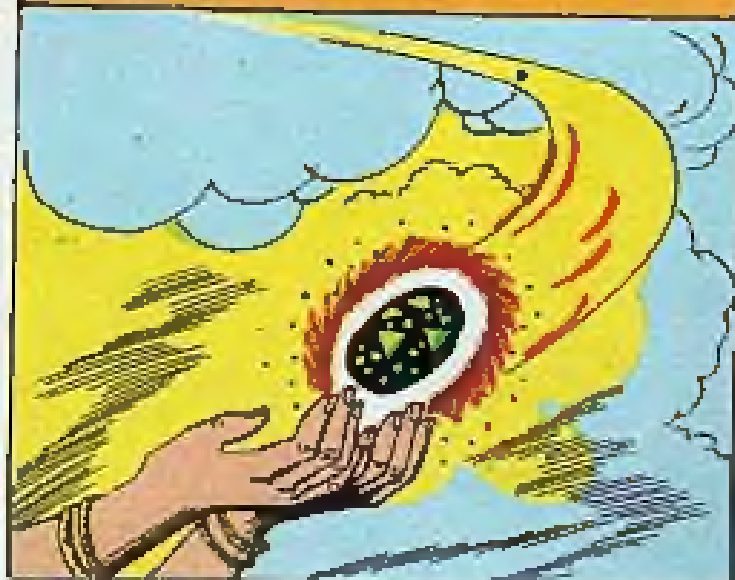
SHE CLOSED HER EYES AND THOUGHT OF THE GEM OF THE SNAKE PEOPLE, WHICH COULD REVIVE THE DEAD.



AND LO, THE GEM, THE MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION OF THE SNAKE PEOPLE, CAME SAILING THROUGH THE SKIES...



... AND DROPPED INTO HER PALMS.



ULOOPI WENT TO BABHRUVAHANA.

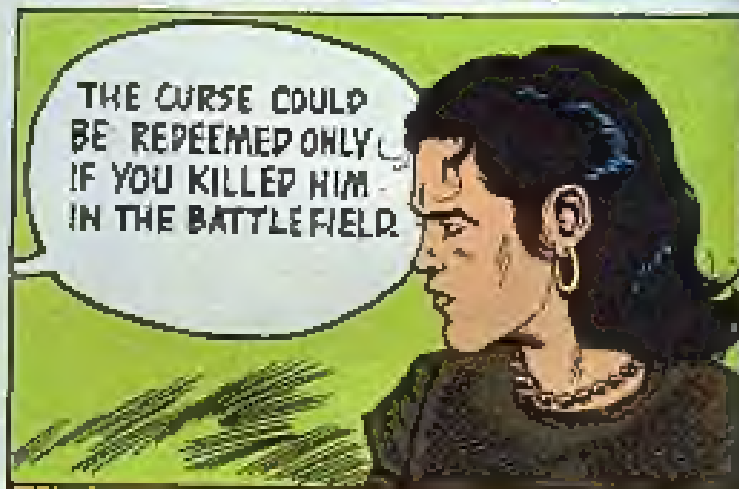


RISE, O SON! YOUR FATHER HAS BEEN KILLED BY YOU FOR HIS OWN GOOD.

HE HAD BEEN CURSED BY THE VASUS TO GO TO HELL.

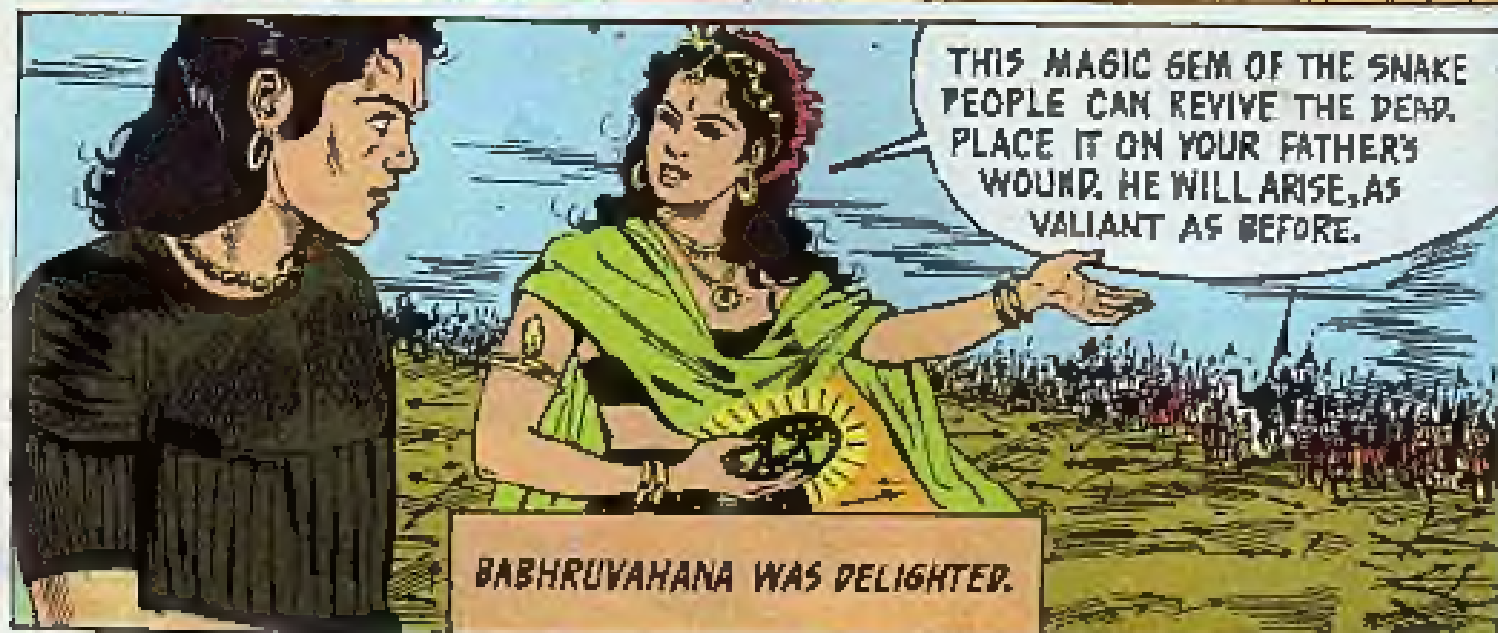


THE CURSE COULD BE REPEEMED ONLY IF YOU KILLED HIM IN THE BATTLEFIELD.



THE WORDS DID NOT CONSOLE BABHRUVAHANA.

THIS MAGIC GEM OF THE SNAKE PEOPLE CAN REVIVE THE DEAD. PLACE IT ON YOUR FATHER'S WOUND. HE WILL ARISE, AS VALIANT AS BEFORE.

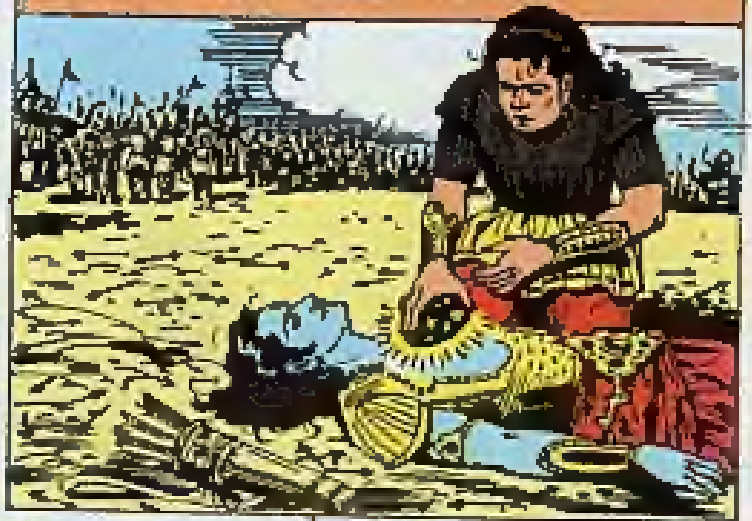


BABHRUVAHANA WAS DELIGHTED.

DEAR MOTHER, HOW COULD I HAVE EVER DOUBTED YOU? PLEASE FORGIVE ME. I AM EVER GRATEFUL TO YOU.



HE WENT UP TO ARJUNA AND PLACED THE GEM ON HIS CHEST WHERE THE ARROW HAD PIERCED HIM.



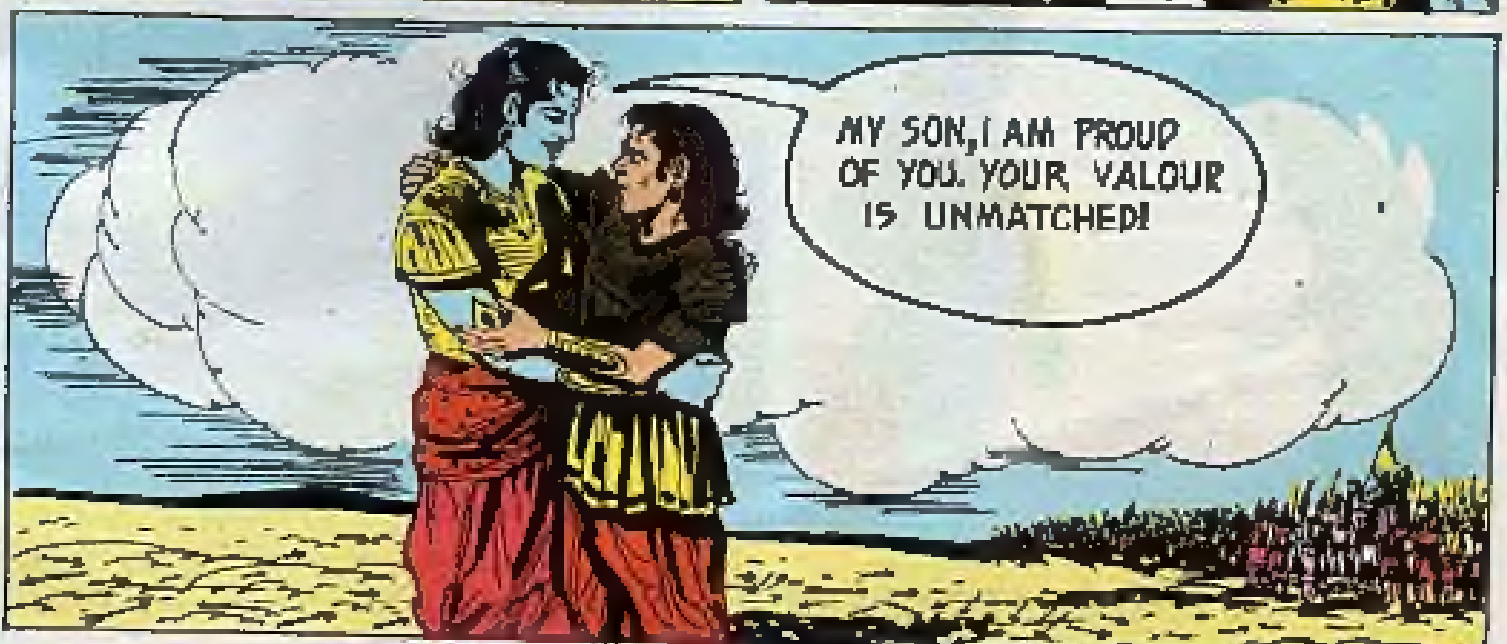
ARJUNA WOKE UP RUBBING HIS EYES LIKE ONE WHO HAD BEEN FAST ASLEEP FOR A LONG TIME.



HE SAW BABHRUYAHANA LOOKING AT HIM IN WONDER.



MY SON, I AM PROUD OF YOU. YOUR VALOUR IS UNMATCHED!





ONLY THEN DID ARJUNA NOTICE CHITRANGADA AND ULOOPI. HE TURNED TO BABHRUVAHANA.

WHAT ARE YOUR MOTHER'S DOING ON THE BATTLEFIELD?



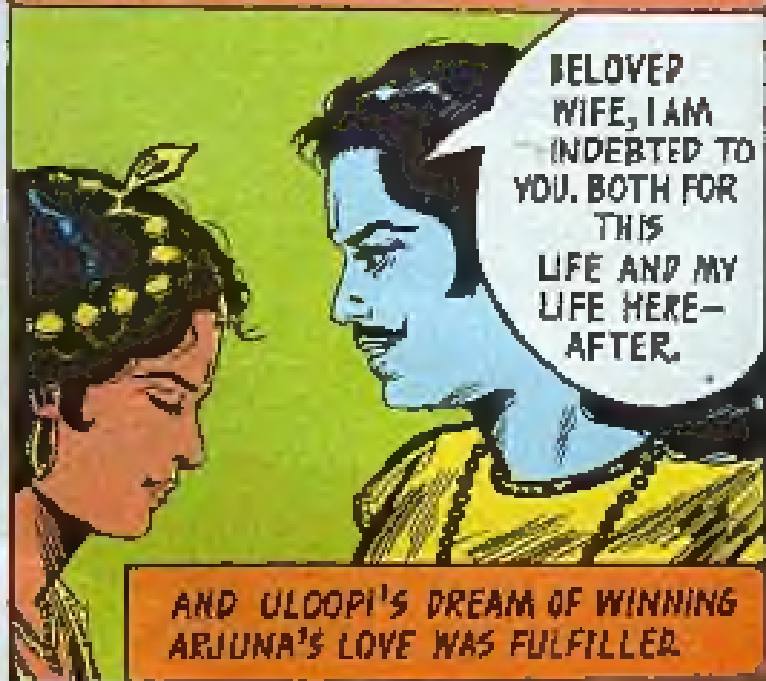
BABHRUVAHANA BOWED HIS HEAD RESPECTFULLY.

MOTHER ULOOPI WILL EXPLAIN ALL.



ULOOPI TOLD ARJUNA ALL ABOUT THE CURSE OF THE VASUS.

BELOVED WIFE, I AM INDEBTED TO YOU. BOTH FOR THIS LIFE AND MY LIFE HERE-AFTER.



AND ULOOPI'S DREAM OF WINNING ARJUNA'S LOVE WAS FULFILLED.